



BENJAMIN R. HYATT
SUPERINTENDENT

HEARD COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

P.O. Box 1330
131 EAST COURT SQUARE
FRANKLIN, GA 30217
706/675-3320
FAX 706/675-3357

April 27, 2000

Dear FD2000 Project Coordinator,

Why is USDA making such drastic changes without input from local School Nutrition Program Directors? We are the people who use the program everyday. The changes will cost my program too much money and reduce the quality of the food I receive. Please get input from all states and evaluate any changes carefully.

Georgia has a very good FDP and I think that Georgia SNP directors are happy with the program.

Please consider my comments on the following proposed changes:

1. Expand the use of long-term contracts.

*Okay if applied to the existing FDP system - it would probably result in more timely deliveries and lower cost.

*In reading the narrative included in February 14, USDA Proposal for Change, it states; "Depending on how long-term contracts are implemented, USDA could buy certain products when the market needs support; but have vendors deliver them when the are needed by the customer. This would essentially transfer much of the storage problem to vendors who are more suited to handle it."

If vendors must store foods long term, they will add storage fees to our costs. We do not want to implement long-term contracting in a manner that would transfer the storage problem to vendors.

2. Test best - Value contracting

*Good if applied to existing FDP.

*How will commercial packaging make vendors more responsible for product liability and safety.

4. Allow vendors to use commercial labels.

*Disagree – no one sees the labels except SNP workers

*If USDA products are in commercial labels, accountability becomes very difficult or impossible.

*How do we know if we have gotten our full allotment of USDA foods?

*How do distributors account for USDA foods?

*If damage occurs which was damaged commercial or USDA items?

6. Expand Full Substitutability of Commodity Product.

*Opposed to this change.

Processors purchase raw products that are the least costly. This often means non-domestic purchases such as beef from England or Argentina, strawberries from Mexico, etc. leading to safety questions. Is imported food as safe as domestically produced foods? What are the requirements on imported foods and will there be any grading requirements at all on 100% substitution?

Please take some time to review changes before acting too quickly and hurting local School Nutrition Programs.

Sincerely,



Jackie Grover, Director
School Nutrition Program